

VISION

In the TOWER,
To the L. Howard

In his CONTEMPLATION.

22. July, 1681.

And is it so? Or am I in a Dream?
Can I be Catcht in the Snare, my self did Frame?
And am I Catcht? if so, who is the Cause?
Can it be those in whom I did Repose?

If so, must I rail at their Treachery?
No, they must Die by my Industry.
I to promote the Faction's Interest,
Strove to out-strain great *Chitophel's* old Crest.
And now my Mercenary men and I,
Must by Laws Regal Institution Die.
This Smiling Plot Auspicious did appear,
To us Creators of its moving Sphere.
It from our Genius drew its right of Birth,
Which to preserve must we submit to Death.
No Infant of the Royal Race could be,
More Cherisht, than Sweet *Plot* we have done thee.
And fearing thou, shouldst Faulter, Starve or Die,
States great Physicians with their Chymistry.
Compounded Antidots did dayly try,
That thou might Live Monarchy to Destroy.
And must I now, the Brother of thy Father,
Both he, and thee, and I, Dye altogether?
Yet, my dear Nephew, do not dye for fear,
Whilst we are Alive, thou needst not to despair.
If those that have this three years bore the weight,
Begin to Kick, and do their Rider slight.
Upon the backs of others we'll three pack,
Where thou shalt ride in, till their Heart strings crack.
As men ride Post when every Jadd doth tire,
Leaves them half Dead, and Belly deep in Mire,
Thou still shalt have fresh Pads to Ride or Drive,
Deer *Plot* ther's none shall live, thee to Survive.
If I this Dubious point of Fortune Weather,
We'll make the Eminent, as thy own Father.

Ghost, *Vain Mortal Caitif*, Scum of Infamy,
Is this thy Pennance in Extremity.
Canst thou no more relent in this Foresight,
But to run Headlong to Eternal Night.
Dost thou not see Grim Death before thee stand,
With daring Resolution, thee demand?
For thy Sad Soul can no Compassion take,
But let it Perish with thy own sought Fate.
What Black Ambition can Rebellion bring,
Gainst so Great a God, so Just, so Kind a King:

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Answer, Why what art thou that Interrupts my Muse,
And dost Griefs Contemplation thus abuse.
May not I? within these damp and dismal Walls,
Consult what Rising, still produceth Falls,
And how Tradition, proves upon Records,
We had still Ambitious, and Conspiring Lords.
But I must be Confronted by such Spies,
As from the Shades of Darkness doth arise.
And haunts these Nautious, Fulsom, Stinking Cells,
Where Antick Spirits, meet to Charm their Spells

Ghost, No, no, Inhumane Infidel, not so,
I am not raised from the Shades below.
Nor is't my Office Dungeons to disturb,
I am descended from a Higher Orb;
Come to convince thy weak Atheistick Faith,
To make thee know, there is Life after Death.
I am the Ghost of Stafford, which you Murdered,
Which thy own Vote, and all thy Interest furthered.
Tho' I a Howard am, as well as thou,
So near Alljed, my Innocence thou knew,
On thy Honour Guilty; where's thy Honour now?
Why Startled thus, to hear Truth open laid,
Behold here's Staffords-Ghost without a Head.
Thou in my Guiltless Blood thy Hands Imbrued,
Which thou in thy Caballs so long pursued.
And to prove, 'tis no Delusions Influence,
Thy Looks (by Sympathy) draws Blood from hence.
Thou canst not on me so Prophanely gaze,
But my Guiltless Blood, flies in thy Guilty Face.
Packt, Perjur'd Emissaries was your Law,
Which your black Conscience brib'd to make them so;
You at their Summons gave the Fatal Blow.
And thus poor Staffords's Life was Bought and Sold,
By double value, Souls as well as Gold.
To which thou hast such Contribution paid;
Beware, the forfeit signifies thy Head.
Cousin remember, when I was Condemn'd,
To which thy Leading Vote did condescend.
When Sentence on my Innocence was past,
The Tears of Crocodils, thou Weepst as fast;
As if too late Compassion thou hadst took,
Then in the Crowd thou quickly me forsook.
Then with the City Caballs, thou straight return'd,
And of your Conquest Boasted, though Suborn'd.
Let this thy Conscience move, with Guilty Fears,
And go submit unto thy Fellow-Peers,
Which have been Captives here almost three Years.
Owe all thy Treachery to Truth, and Them;
Think what it is to bear a Traytors Name;
To thee that's Guilty; but much more to Them.
Since thou art Fast, speak Truth and set them Free,
No way else left thee to Eternity.
If this great Work of Consequence thou do,
I will save thy Soul, if not thy Body too.
And thus Farewel, these Minutes I did Borrow,
Old Shaftesburie le Condole with thee to Morrow.